

Eastern MRS Meeting Notes  
November 28, 2007  
Hertford County

Counties Present: Gates, Hertford, Nash, Pasquotank, Washington, Wilson,

Introductions

News from Raleigh

Training Issues – Ginger Caldwell

Coming Soon – SOC

Tool Time – Ecomaps, Genograms, Scaling

News from Raleigh

- Charisse Johnson has been named as the new Section Chief – will start Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>. Was formerly at the Division as head of the Community Based Programs team and left to go to Wayne Co DSS.
- Getting started working on the Work First and MRS Institute. Both will be at the Koury Center in Greensboro. WF is in late April, MRS is in August.
- Action for Children published its annual report card.
- Crystal Williams sent Holly some info on data regarding referrals to abuser treatment programs.
- MRS is now available in DW.

Training Issues – Ginger talked about various kinds of training, and training needs.

Update on training as it relates to the Program Improvement Plan. 5 theme areas – Supervision was brought up within all areas. Have developed a workgroup to look at Supervision issues. One of the supervision issues is training, so looking to connect improved supervision and training.

Eastern Director's Association has a meeting quarterly and the one they just had included Program Managers, and they will begin to include Supervisors for counties that do not have Program Managers. They are developing a list-serve to help with communication.

Must make a conscious effort to value training and take the time to allow your staff to attend and reinforce the topics.

CPRs are trying to have training meetings for new policy, etc. Encourage that someone from each county comes – does not have to be a program manager, or even a supervisor. Work First is welcome at these types of meetings/trainings.

Talked about the 3 tier training system. (See handout if not familiar with this – it is included in the training book.) *Suggestion was made that this chart should be added to the ncswelearn website as it is helpful.*

Every six months all intro classes are offered at least once in each of the centers. Are counties able to get their new workers the training that they need in the first year?

- People here said they were able to get into everything ok in the 100 and 200 series but they do have some trouble with the 300 series.

- The 300 series are ones that you can take as your continuing education series (as your 24 hours) although there are many others that you can take to achieve the 2 hours (and the MRS Institute counts).
- There are some new course that are not on the handout: Coaching in the Kitchen, Lifebook training is back – and this is not just for Foster Care or Adoption staff, DV practice course (the DV policy course is a prerequisite).
  - Coaching in the Kitchen can be used by supervisors to find moments to teach their staff as well as line staff learning how to coach families.
- Ncswlearn.org – this is the portal to access for any on-line classes. Currently you can register without having a log-in, but they encourage you to register via this system. Ginger has a handout which is an overview of ncswlearn. Also are handouts that walk you through setting up an account in ncswlearn.
  - One of the things that it does is keep track of your training history and includes classes that you took before this system was up. Supervisors can access their staff's training history as well.
  - The course list will come out on line well before the paper copy comes out and everyone can access the web, but there will be a limited number of paper copies of the training calendar sent out.
  - Can search for training without knowing the name of the class. Under “find a training” can just type in ‘domestic violence’ and it will give you all the classes related to domestic violence.
- On-line classes. One county has tried some of the on-line classes and their staff liked it.
  - Trying to put some dimensions of more classes on-line. Trend to go to blended trainings where there is some on-line and some face-to-face training. As of now Child Development is the only one all on-line, and there are no immediate plans to make any other ones totally on-line.
  - Pre-Service and Supervisor Transfer of Learning course are partially on-line.
  - Computer Equipment needed for on-line training – depends on which kind of training you are doing. Two types of on-line training
    - Self Paced – work at your own pace, you just need access to the Internet.
    - Live on line – have a microphone and a headset and you are able to talk to other participants in the class. You will need a headset (about \$15)
  - Ginger has developed a handout talking about to how to avoid distractions and stay on track with on-line training. Some advance planning will help participants get the most out of it.
  - One suggestion was that if there are several people from the same county that are taking the training they go into a room together and so they were on-line but also taking it together.
- If it is necessary to cancel, please do so as soon as possible so that someone on the waiting list can take your place.
- How do they decide who gets to attend? It depends on when your registration comes in and also what they call “fair access” – if the facility only holds 20 people and one county wants to send 15 and there are multiple other counties want to attend he may only allow some of the large county's staff attend. Clarence also takes geography into

account and some people may be denied if there is another one close to them in the near future.

- Seems to be a gap between training and policy. Frequently have workers come back from training saying that they were told “X” at training, and it is not in policy. There are several issues here:
  - The Division is working on improving communication both with counties and with the trainers.
  - If you feel that there is confusion about information that may have been shared at training, please let Staff Development know. If they don’t know about it, it can’t be resolved. You can call the trainer, or the Staff Development manager if it is a Division manager, if it is a trainer for a contract agency (like AFI) you may need to call Staff Development to find out who the manager of that trainer would be.
  - Also remember the ‘telephone game’ – these are new workers receiving massive amounts of information and may have gotten something jumbled up, or heard something from another participant, not a trainer, and it may not be accurate.
  - Things can also be taken out of context and questions asked without complete information being provided. A county worker may ask a question or use an example from their county, but not give the complete situation because there is not time for that, and based on incomplete information the staff returns to their county and confusion builds because no one had complete information.
  - Need to have county workers prepare for training as well, and think about what they are saying when they are talking in class. Realize that you will know more details about a situation from your county than anyone else in the class.
- What Training needs are not being met?
  - Child Mental Health & Adult Mental Health don’t seem to be offered in the East as often.
  - Something for seasoned workers that takes the major core training areas to an Advanced level (Like Sexual Abuse and similar ones). If you have a worker who has been here 10 years, sexual abuse is different than it was then, or you are in a position to appreciate more advanced information.
    - Some of the information has changed so much that you can take the class with the same name, but it is different context (like Intake now versus before MRS.)
    - Feel that it is hard for staff to know when a curricula has been revised. (Maybe the date of revision of the training could be on the chart and in the course description.)
  - Incorporating absent parents
  - TPR – getting to that point
  - 215 services – when to close (look at what is being said in the in-home training) and also a stand alone class so that seasoned workers can go and have a discussion type training. Trainer would need to be someone who has experience in doing the class.
  - Could connect “stuck cases” with this.
  - WF 101/CPS 101

- Kinship care – working with these situations – something that would include work first and would not require attending preservice.
  - There are some issues with training for WF, the Division is working on this. There are some issues, and the reason that WF cannot be trained at the regional training sites is due to the funding requirements.
- Realize that counties can't send all staff to all training opportunities. However, realize that Staff Development cannot do everything on their own. The county staff that go to the training must be invested in actually learning the information and then the culture of the county must allow them to continue to use it and incorporate it. Some counties have decided that when a staff goes to a training, not just Staff Development training, but also MRS Institute or a meeting with CPR, they must then present to their co-workers at staff meetings. This way multiple staff benefit from one person going to training.

### Coming Soon – System of Care

The SOC of care grant for the 3 counties is getting ready to end, but we do not want SOC to go away. Several other counties have partnered with the original 3 and have figured out ways to bring SOC into their counties. One of the ways we think we can help with that is to bring SOC into these MRS meetings. The two systems parallel and compliment each other. Any suggestions or concerns about that and how it would affect these meetings?

- How many people have some form of SOC in place?
  - Some have MH and DSS working well together, some using multiple county groups.
  - Part of the reason that some rural counties are so successful (Rural Success Program) is that they do a good job of engaging their community partners. Essential that all counties figure out how to do this.
- If you are pulling people together there may be times that the topic discussed is not incredibly interesting or relevant to agencies in the community or outside DSS, and we want to be fair to them and keep it relevant for them, but also still useful for us at DSS.
- Statewide Collaborative – large group of public and private agencies that deal with the same populations – this group brings together the leaders of these statewide agencies twice a month. Are trying to help counties form their own collaborative groups.
- The way we will start this is that in January we will take one of the SOC principles and talk about it. When Holly sends out the agenda have whoever from your agency that will be coming to the meeting have thought about your county in relation to whichever principle we will be talking about.
- Six principles are similar to MRS:
  - Cultural Competence, Child & Family Partnership. Individualized, Strength Based Care for Families, Interagency Collaboration, Community Based Services and Supports, Accountability to Results.

### ToolTime – what are tools that you may use?

May learn about a lot of neat tools in training, but which ones do you really use frequently with families that works well?

- Tools that you learn at training to use with families can be used just as well with staff.
- Genograms & Ecomaps – do you use these when you are figuring out who should be at CFTs? Some counties use them internally at staff meetings, etc, to ensure that everyone understands who is a part of this family.
  - County asked if anyone was using it at CFTs. Some people have used it to try and get the relationships between the family members straight. When there is a large family and everyone goes by a nickname and they may refer to someone as “Grandma” when in fact she is a biological aunt (or not biologically related at all) it can help the staff get the family members straight.
  - An ecomap can help a family visualize their resources more than just talking about them. Also, helps the family realize who they are resources for. There is a link between an ecomap and the Strengths/Needs assessment.
- Do people use the Miracle question? – Some do with families, also some do with staff.
- Scaling – one county here uses this, and several have used it with staff.
  - Not only have them pick what number they feel they are at, but what does that number mean to them. It is good for sparking discussion because what one person means by a 4, may not be what the other person sees as a 4. Also, what is the plan to move to the next number?
  - Also with families, if you have another family member answer the question. The client in question may rate themselves as a 5 but their spouse may say that they feel they have made more (or less) progress and rate them differently. This can prompt discussion as well.
  - Finally need to define the end points. What is a zero and what is a 10 so you know the context of a 5.
- Any other tools that you use?
  - Wilson uses certificates for workers. It has kind of started a competition among workers to see if they can get one as well.

### Other Issues

#### Domestic Violence Data

- The First District has a DV task force was trying to streamline data that is being collected between DSS and law enforcement, and when DSS tried to get their data they found that just in the 7 counties they were operating very differently. They took it to Children’s Services and they decided to look at this statewide because if there are discrepancies in the 7 counties in the First District it is happening everywhere.
  - Several changes have come about because of this: will be editing DataWarehouse so that more than just the first contributory factor comes up, and considering editing the Central Registry to that you have to enter a contributory factor to save a 5104 – currently policy states that you must have one, but there is not an edit in the actual central registry that forces you to have one.
- Crystal Williams sent Holly some info on data regarding referrals to abuser treatment programs. 499 referrals to abuser treatment programs by DSS. 356 were accepted

which means 143 were not accepted. Not sure why, but interesting to look at. 57 referring counties (57 counties that have abuser treatment programs. 12 of those counties made no referrals in an year. 35 counties said that had no access to an abuser treatment program, and 16 said that they had access but it was in a neighboring county.)

- Note: one reason that you might not be able to make a referral because some of them require a court order.

No December Meetings!!

January meetings:

Central: Randolph Co., January 29<sup>th</sup>

Western: Asheville, January 16<sup>th</sup>

East: Sampson Co., January 24<sup>th</sup>

February meetings:

Central: Winston Salem, February 27<sup>th</sup>

Western: Asheville, February 19<sup>th</sup>

East: Pitt Co., February 28<sup>th</sup>